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testant Bible. It is not what it professes to be. The learned Romanists by whom it was prepared and published, and all their other learned divines who have been revising and correcting it from time to time during two centuries and a-half, have laboured to little purpose. It is an antidote against Protestantism, as far as they could make it serve such a purpose. Why, then, do not Protestants collect the Douay and Rhemish translations and burn them? Some Protestants have not shown themselves very moderate or temperate in their mode of carrying on the controversy—I regret to be obliged to confess it; and I trust the CATHOLIC LAYMAN is doing something effectual towards bringing all parties to treat such serious matters with more of the meekness of wisdom. But did ever any one hear of the wildest Protestant—gathering Roman Catholic Bibles together and making a bonfire of them? I confess, for my own part, with more than five and twenty years' experience of the controversy, I have never heard of a Protestant burning a single copy. Why is this?

2. Every one has heard of Protestants taking trouble and going to expense in order to supply their Roman Catholic fellow Christians gratuitously with copies of the version sanctioned by their priests. It is notorious that Protestants would infinitely rather see them read the Roman Catholic Bible than none at all, well knowing, all the time, that this translation was made with an avowedly hostile intention towards the Protestant faith. My second question, therefore, is this—Why do Protestants encourage Roman Catholics to read the Roman Catholic Bible, and help to supply them with it? Is it that they know that even this hostile version is, on the whole, so favourable to the spread of what they believe to be the truth, and so likely to open men's eyes to what they believe to be the errors of Rome, that they are only too thankful to induce Roman Catholics to read it? If this be not their reason I should like to know what is. If it be, I hope your Roman Catholic readers will consider the consequence.

3. When St. Paul was in prison in Rome, he wrote to the Christians at Philippi an epistle, in the first chapter of which he mentions that some persons in Rome were preaching the Gospel, not from any proper motive, but from "envy and contention—not sincerely," he says, "supposing that they raise afflictions to my bonds." In what spirit did the great Apostle bear this trial? "But what," he says, "so that by all means, whether by occasion or by truth, Christ be preached: in this also I rejoice, yea, and will rejoice." I would appeal to all calm judging men, which party among us seems to bear most resemblance to the spirit of the Apostle and his unselfish love for truth—the Protestant, who rejoices to assist and encourage his Roman Catholic brethren to read their own Bible, or the Roman Catholics who denounce the Protestant Bible as "the devil's word," and burn it?

Those candid Roman Catholics who have taken the trouble to compare the two versions, know perfectly well that the differences between them are too trifling and unimportant for the questions at issue between the Churches to be much affected by them, one way or other. But even if this were not so—even if the Roman Catholic version were much more serviceable to their side of the controversy than it really is—my questions could lose nothing of their importance. I shall be thankful if some readers of that communion will not think them unworthy of serious consideration.—Faithfully yours,

X. A.

PIOUS BIRDS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

SIR—As you do not seem to believe the story of the pious sparrow, who was always chaunting *Ave Maria* in the ears of Victor De Plancey,* I can scarcely hope that you will give full credit to what I am about to narrate; but I can assure you I take it from no less an authority than Bonaventura† (a canonized saint of the Church), in his life of St. Francis, and the *Annales Fratrum Minorum* by Lucas Waddingus, published at Rome (*cum privilegio summi Pontificis*) in 1731. St. Francis having been once in dispute with himself whether it were fitter for him to spend his time in praying or preaching, sent to St. Clara and St. Sylvester to consult them thereupon; and they having both answered that he should preach, St. Francis immediately replied, "Let us go forth in the name of the Lord." And, accordingly, the next morning early, having taken two companions with him, he started off without delay, and ran so fast, and with such fervour to fulfil his divine calling, that he appeared endowed with new virtue from heaven, as if touched by the hand of God himself. He soon approached Bevagna, and, seeing a place where multitudes of various kinds of birds were gathered together, he makes haste thither, and salutes the birds as if they were reasonable creatures. The birds being all big with expectation turned towards him, and those who were in the bushes bowed their heads, that they might listen to him, in a manner quite unusual; he then approached them, and earnestly admonished them all that they should hear the Word of God, and said to them—"My brethren birds, ye ought to praise your Creator, who has given you feathers and wings, and good air, and provides for you without your care." At these excellent instructions, the birds, in a wonderful manner, began to stretch out their necks, spread

their wings, open their beaks, and look earnestly at him. Then he, passing through the midst of them in an admirable fervour of spirit, even touched some of them with his tunic, but none of them stirred, till, having made the sign of the cross over them, and given them leave and his blessing, they all flew away together. All these things his companions, who were waiting for him on the road, were witnesses of.*

The same learned and pious writers go on to say that St. Francis proceeded on his travels, and came to a place called Castrum Alvianum, in Umbria, near the river Tiber, where, having collected a number of people and commanded silence, he was scarcely able to make himself heard, from the great noise made by the swallows who were building their nests in the place; whereupon, the man of God, in the hearing of all the people, thus addressed the troublesome birds, "Sisters swallows, it is now time that I should speak, you have said enough already. Hear the word of God, and hold your peace till that be done." Whereupon, as if they were rational animals, they suddenly were silent, nor did one of them move from the place until the whole sermon was finished; whereupon, all who saw it were filled with astonishment (as well they might) and glorified God. The fame of this miracle being spread around influenced many with reverence to the Saint, and true devotion of faith.†

But wonders did not cease there; for St. Bonaventura goes on to inform us that "a scholar of Paris having heard of the fame of the above-mentioned miracle, being much troubled with the continued chattering of a swallow while he was intent on study, said to his companions, 'This swallow is one of those who interrupted St. Francis when preaching, until he imposed silence on them;' and turning to the swallow he addressed him in faith thus, 'In the name of God's servant, Francis, I command you, that when you are near me you always hold your peace.' The swallow, therefore, on hearing the name of Francis, as if taught by the discipline of the man of God, immediately became silent, and placed itself in his hands, as if in safe custody. The stupefied scholar immediately restored it to liberty, and heard its chattering no more."‡

Whether, Mr. Editor, you will believe these stories of docility and obedience on the part of birds, I cannot say; but think their example would be very edifying, if one only had credulity enough to believe such saintly legends with an implicit faith.

Yours, truly,

A CONSTANT READER.

[If we had not the high authority of St. Bonaventura that these things were *real miracles* and *not myths*, we should have been disposed to think they were a mere *pious pleasantry*, invented designedly to diffuse a spirit of attention and obedience among the people. We confess, however, we feel much difficulty in treating as *myths* things so solemnly related as *actual facts*, though men like Dr. Newman may consider such stories the kind of facts *proper for ecclesiastical history*, and say that if swallows did not obey St. Francis and the Parisian student, as narrated, they *might and ought* to have done so; which is all the same thing.

Our correspondent might have gone farther, and shown how St. Francis instructed a *sheep* to attend prayers, and kneel and bleat before the altar of the Blessed Virgin; and how he, at the market-place at Trevi, gently admonished an ass's foal who was running up and down and disturbing him while preaching there; and how he, with a pleasing countenance, said to him, "Brother Ass, I desire thee to

* [We feel much obliged to our correspondent for referring us to the above narrations, which we have taken the trouble to verify by reference to the Latin originals, in both Waddingus and Saint Bonaventura. We think it well to add some of the most surprising passages from the original works.—Ed. C. L.]

No. 33.—Cum igitur appropinquaret Bevania ad quandam locum devenit, in quo diversis generis avium maxima multitudo convenerat, quas cum Sanctus Dei vidisset, alacriter cucurrit ad locum, et eas velut rationis participes salutavit. Omnibus vero expectantibus, et convertentibus se ad eum, ita, ut quas in arbustis erant, inclinatim capitis, cum appropinquaret ad eas, insolito modo in ipsum intenderunt: usque ad eas accessit, et omnes, ut verbum Dei audirent, solite admonuit, dicens. Fratres mei volucres, multum debetis laudare Creatorem qui pluvius vos induit, et penitus tribuit ad volandum; puritatem concessit aeris, et sine vestra sollicitudine vos gubernat. Cum autem eis hæc etsimilia loqueretur, aviculae modo mirabili gestientes, cæperunt extendere colla, protrudere alas, aperire rostra, et in illum attente respicere. Ipse vero cum spiritus fervore mirando, per medium ipsarum transiens, tunica contingeat easdem; nec tam de loco aliqua mota est, donec signi Crucis facto, et licentia data, cum benedictione viri Dei, omnes simul avolarunt. Hæc omnia contabantur socii expectantes in Via. —Opus. St. Bonav., tom. 7, p. 293-4; Lugdun., 1668, tom. 5, p. 519, Venetis, 1754; Waddingus Annales, Rome, 1731, p. 293.

† No. 34.—Venit ad Castrum Alvianum, in modico colle hand prociat amne Tiberi in Umbria exstructum, non longe a Tuderina civitate ibi congregato populo, et indicto silentio, propter hirundines nidificantes in eodem loco, magnisque garrulibus perstrepentes, audiri vix poterat: quas vir Dei, cum ibus audientibus allocutus est, dicens, "Sorores mee, hirundines, jam tempus est, ut loquar et ego; quia vos usque modo satis dixistis: an hite verum Dei tunc silentium, do hoc sermo dei complectitur. At illæ tanquam intellectus capaces, subito tacuerunt; nec fuerunt motæ de loco, donec viri omnis prælatio consummata. Omnes igitur, qui viderunt, stupore repleti glorificaverunt Deum. Istius miraculi fama circumquaque diffusa, multos ad Sancti reverentiam, et fidei devotionem accendit.—Ibid.

‡ In civitate namque Parisiensi scholaris quidam indolis bonæ, cum sociis aliis studio diligenter intentus, dum importuna garrulitate ejusdem infestator hirundinis, dicere capit ad socios: hæc abirundo una de illis est, quæ virum Dei Franciscum predicantem abjurando, donec silentium eis impoieret, molestabant; et convertens ad hirundinem fiducialiter ait. In nomine Servi Dei Francisci præcipio tibi, ut ad me veniens continuo conticescas. At illa, Francisci auditu nomine, quasi viri Dei disciplinis edocta, et statim contuit, et ipsius manibus tanquam tutæ custodie se commisit. Stupefactus scholaris statim eam libertati restituit, et ejus garrulum amplius non audit.—Ibid.

stand still, and not interrupt the word of God, which I am preaching to this thirsty people." Upon which the ass (moved, perhaps, by the humility of the good man in acknowledging his poor kindred) fell on his knees and heard the sermon out.*

We shall not add a word of comment, but merely ask our intelligent Roman Catholic readers whether they believe these stories to be *true*? or whether they consider them silly falsehoods which must have been well known to be such by those who successfully foisted them for ages on the credulous and ignorant, and still continue to do so, wherever the light of a generally diffused knowledge and intellectual cultivation have not rendered such a deception impossible.]

A FEW MORE WORDS ABOUT PURGATORY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

MR. EDITOR—As Jerry and I were coming home from work the other night, I seen that he was very down in himself, and never a word out of him, nor a bit of a song, nor any diversion in life, and says I to him, "What's come over you at all; is it the rent that's troubling you?" "No," says he, "the pig will pay the half-year that's due, and I'm clear up to last March." "Are any of the childer sick?" says I. "No," says he; "thanks be to God they're all hearty." "Well," says I, "what is it ails you? for I see plain that something is troubling you." "Well," says he, "I won't deny it to a friend like you; I'm greatly troubled in mind since I got the Bible, for," says he, "I can't get that verse out of my head, 'What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his soul?'" "Well," says I, "if it's the Bible is troubling you, can't you give it back to the Reader, and have done with it?" "I would be no use," says he, "for I couldn't get it out of my mind, and besides," says he, "though it's troubling me, still I know that it's for my good 'tis doing it, and," says he, "it reminds me of what happened the year of the great fever. I was standing at the door one day as Doctor Hennessy was passing, 'and,' says he, 'Jerry, get that dung away from your door or you'll bring the fever into your house,' but I only laughed at him, so the next day he told me the same thing, but I kept never minding, but he kept on warning me until I got fairly vexed about it, and at last I answered him quite short, and told him to mind his own business, so after that he said no more, but signs on, the fever came into the house, and stretched myself on the bed for three weeks, and carried off two of the childer, and then I saw, when 'twas too late, that though the Doctor vexed and troubled me, 'twas for my good; and," says he, "Dan, I'm thinking it's just the same with the Bible; it's vexing and troubling me, but I know that 'tis for my good, so I can't put it away from me." "And," says I, "what part of it is troubling you?" "Well," says he, "every part, for I can't open it but I find something to trouble me. I find in it that all the holy water in Ireland can't blot out my sins, for there's nothing but the blood of Christ that can do it; and it troubles me to find in it, that all the prayers I've been offering for years to the holy saints won't do me a bit of good, because there's but 'one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;† and it's troubling me to find in it that the Virgin, though a holy and blessed woman, can't put in a good word for me, for it speaks of no advocate but *one*, 'Jesus Christ the just.‡ These are the things that's troubling me, for I see that the Bible is against us, but how could I ever give up the religion that I have been taught since I was the size of a sod of turf?" "Take my advice," says I, "and put away the book entirely." "I can't," says he, "for I know that it means well by me; but I won't deny that it troubles me greatly, not being able to find a bit of our religion in it, high or low." "There it is," says I, "isn't that the very thing Father John told us?" "Sure," says I, "how could an ignorant man like you find it?" "Tisn't the ignorance," says he, "that keeps me from finding it, for," says he, "I can find the Protestant religion in it, and sure I wouldn't find that any more than the other if 'twas the ignorance that ailed me; and," says he, "if our religion was in it, I'd be sure to find it." "But," says I, "have you searched well?" "I have," says he, "and since the argument the Reader had with Andy Kelly about Purgatory, I've been looking all through the Bible to find it, but the more I look for texts for it, the more I find texts against it. But," says he, "I'm thinking that I can't find Purgatory in the Bible for the very reason that Billy Jones couldn't find about the war in the newspaper." "How was that?" says I. "Why," says he, "I was going along the road with the master, and who did we meet but Billy, with a big newspaper in his hand. 'What are you reading?' says the master. 'Troth then, your honour, says Billy, 'it's looking for the war I am.' And haven't you found it?" says the master. 'Never a word about it, says he. 'It ought to be there,' says the master, 'but have you read it all?' 'Every word,' says Billy, 'for I'm this two hours at it.' So with that the master looks at it, and says he, 'no wonder for you not to find it.' 'Why so?' says Billy. 'Because tisn't in it,' says he, 'for that's

* Waddingus An. 1213, n. 6, p. 153.

† Mark viii, 36.

‡ 1 Tim. ii. 5.

§ 1 John ii. 1.

* See CATHOLIC LAYMAN for August, 1855, p. 94.

† Opera. Lugd. 1668, vol. 7, p. 293-4.